

**James Madison to Edmund Randolph, August 27, 1782.
Partly in Cipher. Transcription: The Writings of James
Madison, ed. Gaillard Hunt. New York: G.P. Putnam's
Sons, 1900-1910.**

TO EDMUND RANDOLPH.1

Philadelphia, August 27, 1782.

Dear Sir, —Your favor of the sixteenth came duly to hand yesterday. The hints which it gives with regard to merchandizes imported in returning flags, and the intrusion of obnoxious aliens through other States, merit attention. The latter subject has, on several occasions, been mentioned in Congress, but, I believe, no committee has ever reported a remedy for the abuse. A uniform rule of naturalization ought certainly to be recommended to the States. Their individual authority seems, if properly exerted, to be competent to the case of their own citizens. * * *

We are still left without information concerning negotiations in Europe. So long a silence of our Ministers, at so interesting a crisis, grows equally distressing and inexplicable. The French fleet has gone into Boston harbour. The arrival of a British fleet on this coast is reported, but disbelieved by many. The French army is on its way northward from Baltimore. It is to proceed in five divisions, the first of which is to be here about Friday next.

Congress received yesterday a letter from General Washington enclosing one to him from Carleton, with the proceedings of the court-martial in the case of Lippencot. It appears that this culprit did not deny the fact charged upon him, but undertook

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to justify it as a necessary retaliation, and as warranted by *verbal* orders from the Board of Refugees. The court decided this warrant to be insufficient, but acquitted him on the pretext that no *malicious* intention appeared. Carleton explicitly acknowledges and reprobates the crime, and promises to pursue it in other modes; complaining, at the same time, of irregularity in the step taken by General Washington of selecting and devoting to execution an innocent, and even capitulant, officer, before satisfaction had been formally demanded and *refused*. General Washington seems to lean to the side of compassion, but asks the direction of Congress. What that will be, may, perhaps, be communicated in my next.

The consideration of your territorial report has been resumed. The expedient which was meant to conciliate both sides proved, as often happens, a means of widening the breach. The jealousies announced on the side mentioned in my last were answered with reciprocal jealousies from the other, and the report between the two was falling to the ground, when a commitment, as a lesser evil, was proposed and agreed to.

Mr. Jones and his family arrived on Sunday at Germantown, without halting in this city. Himself, his lady, and little son, were all extremely sick during the whole journey. Mrs. Jones is still very much indisposed, and Mr. Jones considerably so. They do not propose to come into the city till the salubrity of Germantown shall have enabled them to encounter its noise and polluted atmosphere.

I cannot, in any way, make you more sensible of the importance of your kind attention

to pecuniary remittances for me, than by informing you that I have for some time past been a pensioner on the favor of Haym Salomon, a Jew broker. Will not the agent of Mr. Morris give a draft, payable to me, for notes payable to the bearer? Or may not the notes be so endorsed as, in case of accident, to prevent payment to another? In either of those cases, a remittance of notes (if they can be procured for me) by the post will be safe. But

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my present situation renders such a conveyance preferable to delay, even if neither of the foregoing expedients be practicable. Show this paragraph to Mr. Ambler, if you please.